

Portfolio for Environment and Climate Change Councillor T Marsh

Report to Council – 15 July 2026

The Environment Team continues to work hard to support the Council's corporate priority of protecting the environment for the future. Through a wide range of services and initiatives, the team remains focused on improving environmental quality, supporting sustainable communities, and encouraging positive action across the Borough.

Waste and Recycling

Missed bins

Following the implementation of the recent round changes, there has been an increase in reports of missed bin collections. While a temporary rise was anticipated during the transition period, it has been recognised that some issues have persisted beyond initial expectations. A significant proportion of these reports relate to garden waste collections, including those associated with the ongoing sticker issues. The Council would like to thank residents for their patience and understanding during this period of transition.

The Council is taking a proactive approach to addressing these concerns, with targeted improvement plans now in place. This includes enhanced engagement with collection crews to promote greater consistency, updates to in-cab systems, and a focused approach to identifying and resolving repeat missed collections. These actions are aimed at strengthening service reliability and ensuring that residents across the Borough receive an improved and more dependable service moving forward.

Garden Waste

Garden waste subscriptions are currently higher than this time last year, reflecting strong resident uptake of the service. However, a number of issues have been experienced with the garden waste sticker process, including challenges with the sticker machine and distribution. These factors have contributed to some missed collections and a degree of resident dissatisfaction.

The Council has undertaken a thorough review of the service, including a lessons learned exercise with the team, to identify areas for improvement. As a result, changes to the implementation process are planned for next year to strengthen delivery and minimise disruption. In the meantime, work is already underway to address current concerns, including reviewing the effectiveness of the sticker process, improving communication with residents, and supporting crews to ensure a more consistent and reliable service across the Borough.

Food Waste

The Council has a transition agreement in place for the implementation of food waste collections across the Borough, with a requirement to introduce the service by 1 October 2027. To support this, a trial is scheduled to commence in September 2026 in the Larkfields estate in Nuthall and the Cloverlands area of Watnall. Prior to the launch, information about the scheme, along with a resident survey, will be distributed from 17 August 2026, with food waste caddies and containers being delivered from 7 September 2026.

A programme of resident engagement activity, including local roadshows and workshops, is being developed to provide further information and encourage participation. The trial will enable the Council to better understand operational requirements and identify any issues at an early stage. Any lessons learned will be used to inform and strengthen the wider roll out of food waste collections across the Borough. Collected food waste will be processed at a facility in Colwick, Nottingham.

Simpler Recycling

At the end of March 2026, residents were able to place additional items in their recycling bins, including plastic pots, tubs and trays, Tetra Paks and foil, following changes to the collection service.

These changes were brought about by the Simpler Recycling initiative mandated by Government through the Environment Act 2021. Since their introduction, there has been a positive reduction in contamination rates, referring to materials that should not be placed in the green-lidded recycling bin.

By way of comparison with the same period last year, contamination rates in April reduced from 11.9% to 7.3%, and in May from 11.2% to 8.7%. This represents a substantial improvement and reflects the positive impact of clearer guidance, targeted communications, and that residents are able to recycle even more materials than before through kerbside collection.

Kerbside Battery Recycling

Members will be aware of the increasing number of vehicle fires linked to the presence of batteries, particularly lithium batteries and items such as vapes, that are incorrectly disposed of within general waste and recycling collections. To help mitigate this risk, and to provide residents with an additional recycling opportunity to safely dispose of these items, the Council will be introducing a kerbside battery recycling scheme in late summer.

The scheme will enable residents to place household batteries in clear bags (ideally freezer bags) and present them on top of their bin on their normal collection day. Collection crews will then safely remove and store these items separately on the refuse vehicle.

The scheme will be supported by a communications campaign launching in the summer, with further detailed information to be provided through the Council's usual

communication channels. More comprehensive guidance will also be included within the bin collection calendars distributed to residents in November, ensuring widespread awareness and understanding of the new service across the Borough.

Parks and Open Spaces

The past year has been a busy period for the Parks Team, with a wide range of improvement projects delivered across the Borough. Key highlights include a fully refurbished play area at Eastcote Avenue in Bramcote, the installation of new, dynamic play equipment at Coronation Park in Eastwood, and improved accessible surfacing at the play area in Jubilee Park, also in Eastwood.

Accessibility to green spaces has been further enhanced through the surfacing of over three kilometres of paths, including works at the Nottingham Canal, Dovecote Lane Recreation Ground in Beeston, Cator Lane Recreation Ground in Chilwell, and Bramcote Quarry. Progress has also been made at Brinsley Headstocks, where a substantial piled foundation has now been constructed.

The team has continued to prioritise biodiversity, including the creation of a new sensory garden at Bramcote Hills Park and habitat improvements across the Borough. Restoration work along the Nottingham Canal is supporting the endangered water vole, while new flower-rich grasslands at Brinsley Headstocks and Toton Fields Local Nature Reserve are now establishing well.

Forward Programme

An extensive programme of work is planned for the year ahead.

At Brinsley Headstocks, the team is progressing discussions with specialist timber construction companies to develop a suitable approach for the replacement wooden structure. Alongside this, a suitable cap for a previously unrecorded mineshaft has been designed, and contractors are currently being sought to undertake this work.

At Bramcote Quarry, which was adopted by the Council last year, public consultation has been completed and feedback has been used to update the site's management plan. Initial work to improve accessibility has already been carried out, and a wider programme of improvements is now being developed to transform the site into a fully accessible open space. An application is also being prepared to Natural England to designate the Quarry as a Local Nature Reserve, which would become the 16th in the Borough.

In addition, a five-kilometre circular walking route has been identified, linking Bramcote Quarry with four other Council-managed Local Nature Reserves: the Nottingham Canal, Pit Lane Recreation Ground, Stapleford Hill and Bramcote Hills Park. This "five nature reserves in five kilometres" route will connect a diverse range of habitats and showcase the Council's commitment to enhancing the environment for both residents and wildlife.

Parks Survey

The Parks Team continues to carry out an annual customer survey of parks and open spaces, with a third of sites reviewed each year on a rolling basis. The survey will be based on Green Flag standards and will provide valuable insight into how well sites are maintained from a user perspective.

This year, the survey has been updated to place greater emphasis on accessibility and biodiversity, alongside broader questions about how residents use green spaces and what they would like to see in the future. The findings will be used to inform a new performance indicator and help shape future development plans and the Council's capital investment programme.

D.H. Lawrence Heritage Walking Route

A report was presented to Cabinet at the end of June outlining proposals to develop an enhanced D.H. Lawrence walking route, aimed at strengthening connectivity between key heritage assets and green infrastructure across the Borough. The proposal builds on the existing circular route centred on Eastwood, which already incorporates important literary and historic locations such as the Birthplace Museum. While this provides a strong foundation, the current route does not fully reflect the wider range of heritage assets associated with D.H. Lawrence or the Borough's mining history.

The enhanced route seeks to create a more comprehensive and integrated walking experience, including strengthened links between key sites such as Brinsley Headstocks and Colliers Wood. This will help create a clearer and more cohesive heritage corridor, connecting important mining and literary locations. At Brinsley Headstocks, reconstruction of the wooden structure is currently underway and is anticipated to be completed by the end of the year, subject to contractor availability. The delivery of the route alongside the headstock's restoration will help position the site as a key destination within a broader heritage trail. It will also improve connectivity between green infrastructure assets, supporting better access to open spaces and encouraging walking and recreation across the Borough.

Hedge Cutting

Due to the bird nesting season, hedge cutting across the Borough does not commence until June each year. The Grounds Maintenance Team is responsible for managing hedges across approximately 450 Council properties, along with a further 195 outlying sites.

Two programmed hedge cutting cycles are carried out annually, typically in June and September. Across these programmes, around 95,000 square metres of hedging is maintained, equivalent to approximately 23 acres or 14 football pitches. In addition, on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council, the Environment Team undertakes hedge cutting along 15 public rights of way, alongside shrub maintenance at 35 highway locations across the Borough.

Grass and Verge Cutting

As the Borough moves into the peak growing season, grass growth has accelerated significantly. In some locations, this may impact access along footpaths and public rights of way.

The Environment Team carries out surface cutting along public rights of way on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council twice each year to maintain safe and accessible routes. While undertaking this work, the team also identifies and reports issues such as overgrown hedges, damage, or other obstructions to the County Council for further action.

The Council appreciates Members' continued patience during this period of rapid growth and increased demand. Any urgent concerns can be raised directly with the Environment Team.

Weed Control

Work to control weeds on the adopted highway and within town centre locations is ongoing on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council. The Borough is currently at the peak of the weed growing season, and staff are working proactively to maintain safe, accessible, and well-presented streets, parks, and green spaces.

In recent years, there has been increased scrutiny regarding pesticide use, driven by concerns about impacts on human health and the environment, alongside national policy encouraging reduced reliance on chemical treatments.

In response, a report was submitted to Cabinet on 30 June 2026 seeking approval to trial alternative weed control methods, alongside the suspension of spraying in high-footfall parks and play areas. This approach will help build an evidence base to inform a new Pesticide Policy, which is expected to be considered by Cabinet in the autumn.

Environmental Enforcement (WISE)

Since the start of the financial year, enforcement activity has continued through the Council's partnership with WISE, focusing on tackling littering and fly-tipping across the Borough. This reflects clear feedback from residents calling for stronger action to improve local environmental quality, alongside ongoing education and prevention work delivered by the Waste and Recycling Team and Neighbourhood Wardens.

To date, 869 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) have been issued, with littering, particularly cigarette-related waste, accounting for most offences. In addition, 6 FPNs have been issued for fly-tipping, reflecting a targeted approach to known incidents and priority locations.

Encouragingly, this approach is having a positive impact. Prior to the introduction of WISE in 2024/25, the Waste and Recycling Team collected 78 tonnes of fly-tipped waste. In the last financial year, with WISE in place, this was reduced to 38 tonnes, representing a decrease of approximately 51%.

The contract also delivers wider community benefits through its social value commitments. This has included support for local initiatives such as a local food bank. A proportion of income from Fixed Penalty Notices retained by the Council must be ring-fenced for environmental improvements. This income has helped to support free bulky waste collection days. Further joint initiatives, including community litter-picking events, are also being developed.

Neighbourhood Wardens

During April and May of this year, the Neighbourhood Wardens have continued to deliver a wide range of frontline services across the Borough. This has included responding to 50 reports of abandoned vehicles, addressing 45 dog-related complaints, and managing 2 cases involving stray dogs.

In addition to their enforcement role, Wardens remain a visible and valued presence within local communities, with a strong emphasis on engagement and education. So far this year, they have delivered 10 community events, including local clean-up activities and awareness sessions promoting responsible dog ownership.

The next planned event is a Community Safety Day taking place on 8 July 2026 in Beeston Square. Over the summer period, Wardens will also be hosting a series of pop-up events across the Borough to encourage responsible behaviours such as litter disposal and tackling dog fouling. Further details will be shared with Members in due course.

Climate Change

Broxtowe Borough Council's Climate Forum - Shaping Climate Solutions Together

The Council hosted its second Climate Forum on 24 April 2026 at Attenborough Nature Reserve. The event was well attended, with over 70 participants taking part throughout the day.

Delegates heard from a range of climate change and nature experts, as well as local organisations and community groups, who shared practical ideas and solutions. The event provided a strong example of effective collaboration and community-led action, helping to inspire positive environmental change across the Borough.

Heat Hub Events

The Council continues to work in partnership with Nottingham Energy Partnership's (NEP) Home Energy Advice Team Hub (HEAT) to deliver free, in-person workshops for residents.

These two-hour sessions are designed to support homeowners to reduce carbon emissions, improve comfort within the home, and lower energy bills. To date, two workshops have been delivered in the Borough: one in Eastwood, focusing on solar panels, which was attended by 17 residents, and one in Nuthall, focusing on retrofit measures, attended by 29 residents.

Both events have been very well received, and further opportunities to deliver additional sessions throughout the year will be explored.

Climate Change benchmarking

The Council has once again achieved a 'B' rating through the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) for 2025. CDP is a globally recognised framework that enables organisations and local authorities to measure, manage and publicly disclose their environmental impact, particularly in relation to climate change and carbon emissions.

This rating reflects the strong progress being made in reducing carbon emissions and improving environmental performance across the Borough. Feedback from the most recent submission highlighted that the Council is performing strongly and was close to achieving a higher rating.

Submissions for 2026 are currently in progress, with the Council working towards achieving an 'A-' rating. Attaining this level would demonstrate clear leadership in climate action and position the Council amongst the highest performing authorities in this area.

The Climate Emergency UK Scorecard assessment process has now commenced for 2027. The Council was previously recognised as the 'most improved' District Council across Nottinghamshire and, as a result, has been selected to take part in this round of assessment.

The scoring process will continue throughout Summer 2026, with final results expected to be published in Spring 2027. These scorecards provide an important benchmarking tool, enabling the Council to measure its progress against other local authorities and identify further opportunities to strengthen climate action and delivery.

Local Area Energy Plan (LEAP)

The final Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) has now been received, setting out the most cost-effective pathway to decarbonisation across the Borough and the wider East Midlands region. This work was undertaken in partnership with a cohort of neighbouring authorities, including Rushcliffe and Gedling Borough Councils. The report aligns local priorities with wider regional ambitions and national policy, and considers key areas such as energy supply and demand, transport, buildings, industry, and the natural environment.

Members may also be interested to note that the University of Nottingham's retrofit roadmap project has helped to inform the development of the LAEP. This work has helped shape both the local position and the emerging Retrofit Strategy for Nottinghamshire, ensuring alignment between local delivery and wider strategic planning.

The report from the University of Nottingham will be presented to Cabinet on 21 July 2026, where Members will be updated on the outcome of the consultation work with

the University of Nottingham and how this partnership work integrates with both the LAEP and the countywide retrofit strategy.

A regional launch of the final documents is anticipated by the end of summer 2026.

National Emergency Briefing on the Climate and Nature Crisis

Looking ahead, the Council will be hosting a free screening of the National Emergency Briefing on the Climate and Nature Crisis on Tuesday 28 July 2026 at the Council Chamber.

The briefing explores the implications of climate and nature decline across a range of areas, including public health, food systems, national security, and the economy. Following the screening, a Q&A panel session will be held to support audience discussion and explore how individuals, communities and organisations can respond to the challenges outlined.

Green Festival

Plans for this year's Green Festival, taking place on Saturday 19 September 2026 at Coronation Park in Eastwood, are well underway.

Now in its fourth consecutive year in Eastwood, the event will provide residents with a free, family-friendly day, bringing together a range of organisations and experts. Attendees will have the opportunity to access advice and information on supporting nature, improving energy efficiency, reducing household bills, and a variety of other environmental topics.

Green Rewards

There are currently 3,700 residents signed up to the Green Rewards platform (as of 19 June 2026), demonstrating continued engagement with the Council's environmental initiatives.

In October 2025, the Council undertook a resident survey on Green Rewards, which received 178 responses. Results showed that 86% of respondents were aware of the Green Rewards scheme, with 67% of those confirmed as registered users. Work is currently underway between the Council and the platform provider, Jump, to identify and address opportunities for improvement and to further increase participation.

Congratulations are extended to Beeston Rylands, which has won the Ward Prize for the second consecutive year. Residents have chosen hedgehog houses as their biodiversity award, which are scheduled to be installed in Autumn 2026.